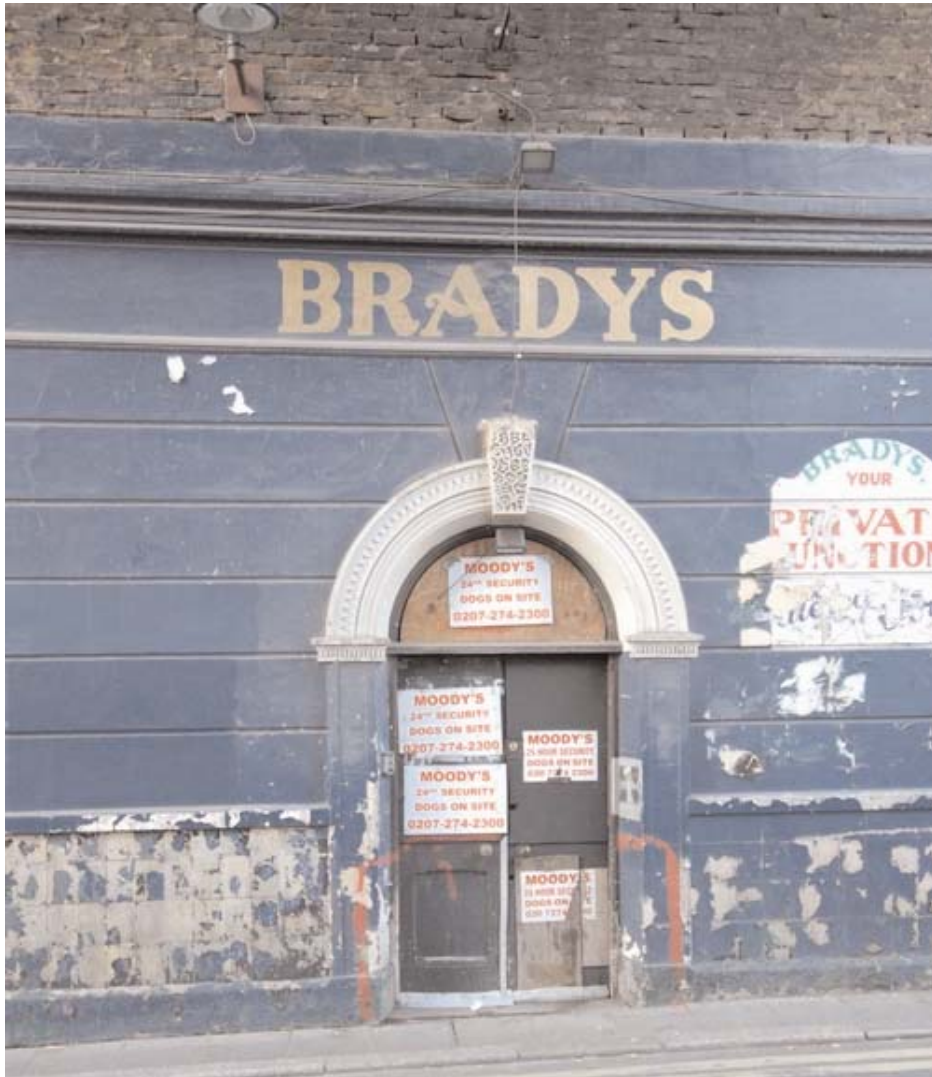


ABC Brixton



RAILWAY HOTEL REGENERATION PROPOSAL

OCTOBER 2006

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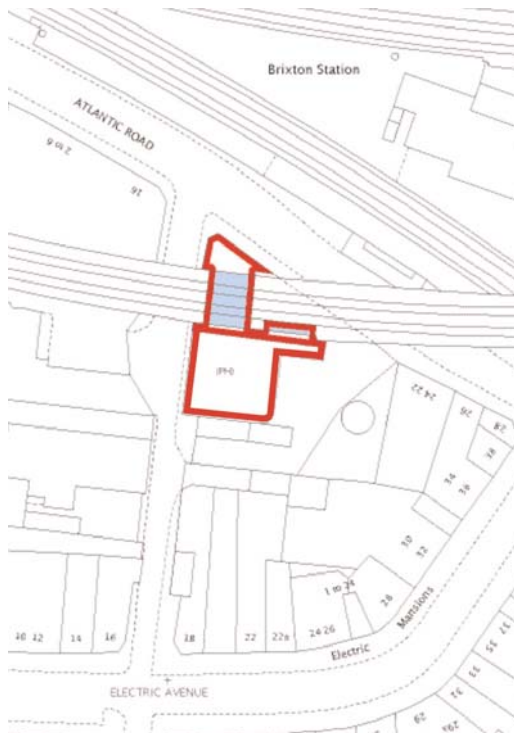
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1. THE OPPORTUNITY

The role of the built heritage in the regeneration of communities is now more widely appreciated and, increasingly, is reflected in central and local government policy objectives. Government policy, in particular, is now more explicitly focussing on sustainability, brown-field development and the need to re-energise and empower communities. As we recognise the importance of the existing character and diversity of the built environment to a community's sense of identity and wellbeing, and the value of sustainably utilising existing assets, we can identify new opportunities for 'heritage expenditure' to have an even greater impact on social and economic as well as physical and environmental regeneration.

Heritage regeneration projects, providing new economic uses as well as valued cultural facilities and visitor attractions, have provided powerful vehicles for the revitalisation of some of the most deprived communities and neighbourhoods in the country. Case studies have shown that the "heritage pound" can attract substantial private and public sector investment, help generate new jobs, and create commercial floor space.

The Railway Hotel is a unique heritage site in an area of economic need. It will be able to attract funding because of its heritage value. The surrounding area also needs regeneration investment and has been identified as a policy priority. The project is therefore particularly well placed to bring together a heritage asset with a regeneration programme to add value to the community of Brixton. It can be an excellent example of heritage-led regeneration.



Above and right: Railway Hotel Plan and photo. The site is divided into two sections, front and rear, with separate land registry entries.

2. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

The Railway Hotel is a key landmark building in central Brixton forming part of the historic Victorian core centred on Electric Avenue and the Market. Built in 1880 it sits on Atlantic Road facing the shops in the Railway Arches, with a long shop frontage and occupying a site that extends southward beneath the railway track that runs from Brixton towards Camberwell along Electric Lane. It is located immediately east of the modern shopping centre based on the Brixton Underground Station and so occupies one of the most accessible sites in the retail and commercial area. The building is clearly visible from Brixton Road and from trains passing on the mainline route.

The building is three stories in height with attic space, constructed in brick with a slate roof. The windows are rounded with stone embellishments. The ground floor is shop fronted, now boarded up. The most striking feature is a six-sided clock tower that is a well known local feature. The external brickwork is in fair condition. There is a modern extension to the rear. The building is an important element in the streetscape of Brixton and is an important feature in the architecture of the Atlantic Road/Electric Avenue area. It is currently unlisted although an application has been made to have it listed. It is situated in a conservation area.

The building was previously a public house that closed in 1999, since when the building had remained vacant and in deteriorating condition. It was a much-used facility and since its closure is greatly missed by local people. The building retains many of the classic features of a High Victorian public house. The building is owned by the London Borough of Lambeth who wishes to sell it.

In view of the importance of the building to the architecture of this inner-city community and the affection in which it is held by local people, ABC Brixton Ltd. is leading a project to develop proposals for its sustainable re-use for a mix of community-led economic and social purposes.



Curved sash window over the foundation stone laid in 1880 by Annie Allen, wife of the original licensee. (Right) The renowned six sided clock tower, sadly disfigured by graffiti.

3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

To create a “place of assembly” for the local community that will offer the following:

- a place to for local organisations and individuals to meet
- the provision of space for entertainment
- a commercially viable bar and restaurant
- community facilities, including workspace and meeting /conference rooms
- incubator facilities for local social enterprises
- The provision of training in the Arts for young people

This will encompass:

- a sustainable social enterprise business solution
- ecological development, including construction that uses sustainable and green principles.

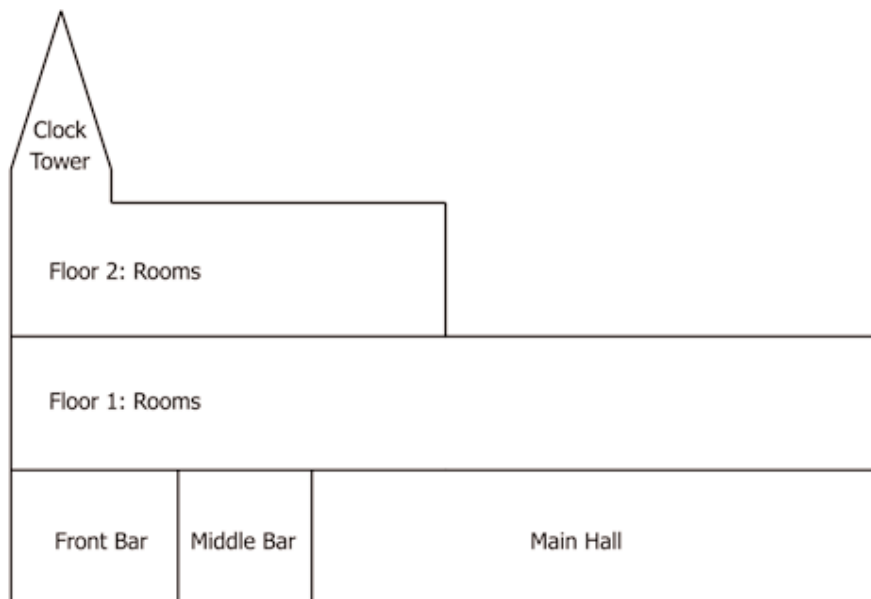
Our aim is to conserve and restore a distinguished and important local building that is currently deteriorating and at risk of loss in a manner that respects its architecture and character, and to re-use it for new contemporary purposes appropriate to the needs of this vibrant and ever-changing multi-cultural community. The biggest challenge will be to sympathetically integrate modern ecological development with the restoration of a Victorian building.

4. GOVERNANCE

A Partnership of local charities, organisations and individuals has formed to develop the proposals. A representative charitable Trust will be established to take ownership of the site, project manage construction and subsequently manage the completed project. The Partnership is working with established private sector entrepreneurs and organisations who will become tenants of the Trust or be responsible through contractual arrangements for the delivery of agreed outputs. The Trust will deliver the community elements of the agreed output.



5. PROPOSED USE



5.1 GROUND FLOOR

A Bar and Restaurant

Part of the ground floor will be taken up by an affordable restaurant and bar. As a creative and cultural industries hub Brixton needs a community-oriented social space where people can entertain and network in a conducive atmosphere and at a fair price. This area will be restored to its original Victorian aesthetic; a style that would reflect and encourage the craft elements within Brixton's creative industries.

A small-to-medium size live music venue

The adjacent ground-floor space will be used as a venue for music and other arts-related performances. It was previously available for these uses when the building was a public house. At present there are two large live music venues in Central Brixton - the Fridge and the Academy that can accommodate large events. People also go to the Windmill in Blenheim Gardens and The Telegraph, near Streatham, to attend smaller events but there is a gap in the market for a small-to-medium size live music venue in regular use in Central Brixton.

Small theatre

Since Brix Theatre was closed central Brixton has had no theatre. The Empress Theatre was demolished in 1992 and a bomb hit Brixton Theatre in 1940. The Ritzy Cinema occupies what is left. At one time there were six theatres in Brixton. Operating a programme at the venue that includes theatre shows would provide a much-needed outlet for those interested in drama.

Arts Centre

Various arts projects and exhibitions could take place at the centre. Brixton has a vigorous cultural and creative industries sector, with many artists, craftspeople and musicians operating successful businesses. However, there is a shortage of exhibition space for them to market their work. In addition, many schools lack music, art and media facilities, and daytime use will focus on training for young people

5.2 UPPER FLOORS

Will be used for:

- Meeting and workshop space for use by community groups
- A mixed media studio and “business hub”, providing shared office and media facilities in order to incubate local social enterprises.

5.3 THE CLOCKTOWER

This will be used to house a wireless internet node which will provide free broadband internet access to the surrounding area.

6. THE INITIAL PARTNERSHIP

A formal Partnership has been established based on the model set out in the Regeneration Through Heritage Handbook that will develop these proposals through the feasibility study stage to the point where funding applications can be made. At this point responsibility will transfer to a charitable trust representative of the key stakeholders and appropriate organisations. Membership has yet to be agreed. The partnership comprises:

ABC Brixton Ltd.

A charitable community regeneration company formed in 2004 by residents of Loughborough Park and central Brixton. Its aim is to bring together local groups with professional bodies and initiate community-led regeneration schemes.

Blacks Ltd.

Has operated a successful private members club in Soho for the past 18 years and is renowned for its excellence in food and wine. It is owned by a Brixton resident and represents private financial investment and expertise in premises operation. It has attracted to the project many professional people from the arts and the media.

The Brixton Society

Is a local amenity group of 30 years standing, famed for its historical and architectural expertise of the locality. It has been involved in various regeneration schemes, most recently in Brockwell Park and Tate Gardens.

Whippersnappers

Is a Community Interest Company which provides a diverse cultural platform from which children and adults of all ages, needs and backgrounds can express and educate themselves through music, sports and the arts. Whippersnappers has been active for 12 years and is based in Brockwell Lido.

Brixton Market Traders Federation

Was formed in 1948 to give a voice to market traders in Lambeth. It is a constituted Mutual Beneficial Society and recognised by Lambeth Council as the representative body for the market. The Federation has recently been forming links with other community groups in Brixton and hope to bring their experience of local street life to this and other projects.

7. NEXT STEPS AND PROJECTED TIMESCALE

October 2006:

Meeting of initial partnership. This meeting will be facilitated by staff from the Prince's Regeneration Trust. This meeting will formalise the proposed mix of uses and agree the governance structure membership.

October- December 2006:

Enrolment of community stakeholders and supporters. To increase the membership of the Partnership from local organisations and establish a Supporters Group of interested individuals.

January 2007:

Meeting of full Partnership. This will include representatives of Lambeth Council. To agree a Feasibility Study Brief and arrangements for funding. **External consultants will be appointed to test the feasibility of the ideas set out in this document, to conduct a consultation and write a business plan.**

8. THE ROLE OF LAMBETH COUNCIL

The Partnership considers that it has a realistic and achievable vision for the re-use of this important building and wishes to proceed to feasibility study and then to business planning and funding application stages. In order to do this, and to justify the costs involved, it is necessary to be assured that, subject to securing funding, the building will be available for purchase. Accordingly, we request that Lambeth Council agree not to dispose of the building for a period sufficient to enable the Partnership to complete these tasks (we suggest 18 months), and subject to funding and being satisfied with our objects and business plans, to sell the building to a Trust to be established to deliver the project.



APPENDIX A - DRAFT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

THE RAILWAY HOTEL PARTNERSHIP MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Railway Hotel Partnership ('The Partnership') represents the bodies and organisations ('The Partnership Members') referred to in Appendix A.

A. The Partnership wishes to record its intentions regarding its joint participation in encouraging the private, voluntary and public sectors to work together with the common purpose of regenerating The Railway Hotel, Brixton. The relevant area is shown edged red on the attached plan, which is part of the administrative area of Lambeth Council.

B. The Partnership wishes to record in this Understanding details of the constitution, terms of reference and working arrangements it has adopted.

C. Mission Statement

'The Partnership has been established to protect and enhance the historical and environmental fabric of The Railway Hotel, to restore the building, to provide visitor access, to present an appropriate level of historical interpretation, create appropriate new uses and business opportunities and to assist sustainable regeneration of the area within which the building is located.'

1. OBJECTIVES OF UNDERSTANDING

The Partnership will collaborate to process the following objectives in the first instance:

1.1 To promote the conservation of the heritage and respect the distinctive quality of the listed structures and buildings of The Railway Hotel and to promote appropriate regeneration and development in the adjoining area.

1.2 To work together to develop the vision and strategy for the early implementation of this regeneration initiative.

1.3 To develop a project that will refurbish the building's area as a prosperous, vibrant, safe and accessible work place and visitor destination, providing employment in a high quality environment.

1.4 To promote the project actively and to work together to obtain funding for its implementation.

1.5 To help raise civic pride and promote an image demonstrating the location as a sound investment opportunity for new uses that will aid sustainable regeneration.

1.6 To develop community involvement in the regeneration of the building.

2. TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT

2.1 The Partnership intends that this Understanding should last for an initial period of three years from the date hereof but may be continued thereafter until terminated in accordance with clause 2.2.

2.2 This Understanding can be terminated after the initial three-year period, at any time, by a Partnership Member giving not less than three months' notice of their intention to terminate.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

3.1 The aims and purpose of the Partnership are set out as follows:

3.2 To endorse and agree the details of the bids to funding bodies for the refurbishment of the building and any other associated conservation and regeneration proposals.

3.3 To oversee the implementation of the funded works and review progress.

3.4 To endorse and agree the details of any further proposals that conserve and regenerate the area of the building.

3.5 To act as a consultative group to discuss future policies and developments that may affect the area within which the building is located and provide comments or advice as required.

4. CONSTITUTION AND WORKING ARRANGEMENTS OF THE PARTNERSHIP

4.1 The Partnership shall consist of ten Members and be representative of organisations, property interests and businesses, each with a commitment to the furtherance of the objectives stated in this Understanding.

4.2 Each Partnership Member shall have one vote.

4.3 The Chair and the Deputy Chair of the Partnership shall be elected by the majority vote of the Partnership Members present at a meeting convened under Clause 5.2 below. The Chair and Deputy Chair shall not belong to the same organisation.

4.4 The Chair and Deputy Chair shall have a fixed term of office for the initial three-year period. At the end of that term an election will be held for a new Chair and Deputy Chair. The previous Chair and Deputy Chair shall be eligible for re-election at a meeting convened under Clause 5.2.

4.5 If the Chair or Deputy Chair of the Partnership resigns or otherwise leaves the Partnership before their term has ended an election will take place at a meeting convened under Clause 5.2 to appoint replacements.

4.6 The Chair shall have the casting vote should the need arise.

4.7 At a meeting where the Chair and Deputy Chair are not present, the meeting shall elect by majority vote a Chair from the Members present for the meeting only.

4.8 Partnership Members shall be entitled to nominate an individual to be a substitute at meetings which the Member is unable to attend. The nominated representative at such meetings shall be able to vote on behalf of the absent Member. The list of nominated representatives will be maintained by Lambeth Council.

4.9 If a Partnership Member resigns or otherwise leaves the Partnership then the Chair, Deputy Chair and other Members are required to ensure that no fewer than four Members participate in the decision and shall be empowered to appoint a new Member to the Partnership.

4.10 Subject to Clauses 4.12, 4.13, 4.14 below decisions are taken by a majority vote.

4.11 Council Officers and others may attend meetings, upon invitation, as advisers but will not be entitled to vote.

4.12 The Partnership may terminate the Membership of any Partnership Member, or their substitute, provided that such a person shall have the right to be heard by the Partnership before a final decision is taken and that any decision has a vote of 75% of the Partnership in favour of termination.

4.13 The Partnership may amend or alter its constitution, terms of reference and working arrangements provided that any decision to do so has a vote of 75% of the Partnership in favour.

4.14 The Partnership may terminate this Understanding in accordance with the provisions in Clause 2.2 above, provided that any decision to do so has a vote of 75% of the Partnership in favour.

4.15 No more than 20% of the representatives of the Partnership may consist of members of the Local Authority.

5. MEETINGS OF THE GROUP

5.1 The Partnership will meet not less than twice a year or as necessary and a report evaluating progress will be submitted to the Partnership Members twice a year. No fewer than seven days' notice in writing of a meeting will be given to Members.

5.2 A quorum of the Partnership shall consist of at least four representatives who shall each be from a different Partnership Member.

5.3 A special meeting of the Partnership may be called at any time by the Chair, or by any two Members, of which no fewer than four days' notice in writing shall be given to other Members of the matters to be discussed.

6. SUB-GROUPS

6.1 Sub-Groups of the Partnership may be established (if necessary, but should be kept to a minimum) to conduct specific/specialised tasks.

6.2 Sub-Groups will normally not exceed six Members and the Chair of the Sub-Group must be appointed by the Partnership. Members of a Sub-Group may be appointed who are not Members of the Partnership.

6.3 Chairs of Sub-Groups will work under the direction of the Partnership, which will determine the terms of reference, powers, duration and composition and will report back to the Partnership.

7. MEMBERS' PERSONAL INTERESTS

7.1 It shall be the duty of every representative of the Partnership to disclose any personal interest in matters coming before the Partnership and, in the event of a conflict of interest, shall at the discretion of the meeting withdraw from voting on the matter, or withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is under discussion.

8. POWERS

8.1 In furtherance of the objectives set out earlier the Partnership may exercise the following powers:

8.2 The Partnership may submit funding applications or other application and invite and receive contributions in support of the project under the aegis of ABC Brixton Ltd. on behalf of the Partnership. In raising funds the parties shall not undertake any substantial permanent trading activities and shall conform to any relevant requirements.

8.3 The Partnership may cooperate with other organisations, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities operating in furtherance of the objects set out in Clause 1 or of similar purposes and to exchange information and advice with them.

8.4 The Partnership may together appoint and constitute such Sub-Groups as it thinks fit.

8.5 The Partnership may do such other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the objectives set out in Clause 1 above.

9. ADMINISTRATION, ACCOUNTS, RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE

9.1 Lambeth Council undertakes to provide administrative support for the meeting arrangement, agendas, minute taking circulation of papers and to retain the list of nominated representatives as detailed in 4.8 above.

9.2 No member organisation shall be obliged to underwrite any shortfall of income against expenditure.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

The members of the Partnership hereby agree that they will treat all information supplied by one to the other as unrestricted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Where there are items of a confidential nature they shall be marked as confidential on agenda papers and treated as totally confidential by the parties (including all those instructed by the Partnership). The parties shall not reveal the confidential information at any time to any outside parties without the prior consent of the parties (except to the extent which may be necessary to carry out objectives set out in Clause 1 above).

11. OWNERSHIP OF DOCUMENTS

The Partnership hereby declares that it will be the terms of the appointment of any external professional advisers to the Partnership that all plans, specifications, reports and other documents provided for use by the Partnership will become the property of the Partnership unless otherwise specified.

12. GENERAL

12.1 To avoid doubt it is expressly confirmed by all parties that this Understanding is not intended to be legally binding between the parties or constitute a legal partnership.

12.2 It is further agreed by all parties that the incurring of expenditure by or on behalf of any of the parties will not be deemed to imply the establishment of a legal partnership or a legally binding obligation between the parties.

12.3 For the avoidance of doubt the Partnership agrees, by entering into this Understanding, that the Members of the Partnership will neither collectively nor individually assume any financial liability in connection with work undertaken by the Partnership.

12.4 Lambeth Council 's participation in this Partnership is without prejudice to its role as Local Planning Authority and Highways Authority and to the need to adhere to statutory regulations.

12.5 Lambeth Council accepts no liability for any professional advice offered by its representatives.

12.6 Each Member may nominate a substitute to vote at meetings at which the Member is unable to attend according to Clause 4.8. Other interested parties may be invited to meetings but may not have voting rights according to Clause 4.11.

[date]

[Signed by the Members of the Group]

APPENDIX A

The Partnership Members:

ABC Brixton Ltd.

Blacks Ltd.

The Brixton Society

Whippersnappers

Brixton Market Traders Federation

Observed by staff from the Prince's Regeneration Trust